

C C Dillon EO
Hester EO
Macomber EO

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February 2, 1959
6:00 p.m.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH
SENATOR J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT
(Secretary's Residence)

We expressed mutual hopes that we could cooperate so that US foreign policy would not be impotent during these two years. Senator Fulbright recalled his concern about functioning with a sharp political division between the Executive and the Congress and recalled his 1946 suggestion that Truman resign.

We discussed what Senator Fulbright considered, and I agreed, was overemphasis on the military aspect of our mutual aid programs. I said, however, that there were practical problems to be dealt with and that if we carried out our theory too rigidly the practical result would be that many friendly governments would collapse and Communism would take over. I mentioned that in many of the newer countries the democratic government was breaking down and authority resided primarily in the military force and that the military demanded new and better weapons and were not satisfied with weapons adequate for internal security purposes.

Senator Fulbright expressed some concern that the commission to study this problem was overweighted with military people.

I referred to the situation in Iran and to the Shah's demands which were ^{military} we thought excessive and beyond the capacity of the country to sustain. I said that as a result he was flirting with the Russians and with a possible non-aggression pact. Senator Fulbright recalled that he and Dillon had last year met with the Shah and had been impressed with his overemphasis on the military. He indicated agreement with our policy of standing firm against increased military aid commitments.

We discussed the problem of Berlin and Germany and the desirability of new initiatives, if only for psychological purposes. I said that there were

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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Dec. 22
MR. 83-91 #17
LJB
6/6/83
FBI, NARS, Date

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

many useful initiatives that could be taken if the US were alone. However, we were not like the Soviet Union which could maneuver for tactical purposes. Any proposal that we made dealt with the interests of allies; it was a long laborious process to get agreement and it involved political factors in each of the allied countries. This effectively prohibited quick initiatives primarily for tactical and psychological purposes to put the Soviets on the defensive.

Senator Fulbright thought we should consider "disengagement" and a withdrawal of Soviet forces to the Soviet Union even though this involved withdrawing US forces to the United States. While, of course, this put us much farther away, that was the situation before the war began and he felt that our European allies could rely upon our promises to come into the war if there were one. I said that the West Germans in particular attached the utmost importance to having adequate US forces in the front line so that if there were an attack, the United States would clearly be engaged from the beginning. Fulbright thought there ought to be greater dependence upon our promises and not so much dependence upon our physical presence in Germany.

The Senator said he thought that the Bureau of the Budget was exercising too much policy responsibility. I think he particularly had in mind the use of funds for cultural exchange, etc.

I said I would probably be sending home daily cables and that I would ask Mr. Macomber to keep him promptly informed of any significant development.

I said I hoped we could see each other frequently on an informal basis. I said that I used to have breakfast occasionally with Senator George but that I was not very keen about breakfast conferences and preferred to read the newspaper and listen to the morning radio. The Senator said he also did not like business breakfasts. I said we might perhaps ride down to our offices together. He said, however, he did not generally leave until about 9:00 and I said that was a bit late for me. However, we might try to work something out along these or similar lines.

The atmosphere was throughout friendly and the differences that emerged were primarily due to his insistence upon policies which I conceded

CONFIDENTIAL

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-3-

were theoretically sound but which I felt could not be carried out in any abrupt way without serious effect upon allied relations.

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